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Message Text

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60
ACTION ARA-20

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3954
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR, MX
SUBJ: ARA NARCOTICS COORDINATORS CONFERENCE

REF: A. STATE 197343; B. SANTIAGO 5557; C. LIMA 7665

1. WE NATURALLY ARE MOST INTERESTED IN AND ENDORSE THE PROPOSED DISCUSSION OF DEA'S EXPANDED PRESENCE IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE GROWING INTEREST IN THE PREVENTION/TREATMENT SIDE OF THE NARCOTICS PROBLEM (PARA 3 OF REF A). IN ADDITION, WE WOULD WELCOME THE CONSIDERATION OF CONSOLIDATED INSTRUCTIONS FOR FY-76 PROGRAM GUIDANCE (PARA 3 REF B) AND A POSSIBLE REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF LA COUNTRIES CONCERNED WITH THE COCAINE TRAFFIC (PARA 2 REF C).

2. IN CONNECTION WITH THE ABOVE-CITED DISCUSSION OF DEA'S PRESENCE AND ITS ROLE IN THE COUNTRY TEAM, WE SUGGEST CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. THE ROLE OF THE NARCOTICS COORDINATOR, WITH MORE SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR HIS MISSION IN RELATION TO DEA AND OTHER NON-STATE MEMBERS OF THE COUNTRY TEAM.

B. THE NECESSARILY AMBIVALENT ATTITUDE OF U.S. EMBASSIES
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TOWARD U.S. CITIZENS CHARGED WITH NARCOTICS OFFENSES. THAT

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IS, THE REQUIREMENT THAT WE PROTECT THEIR RIGHTS AS U.S. CITIZENS, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME ENCOURAGING THE HOST COUNTRY TO COOPERATE WITH US IN STEMMING THE FLOW OF NARCOTICS INTO THE U.S.

C. THE NEED FOR DEA TO WORK AS CLOSELY AS POSSIBLE WITH HOST COUNTRY AUTHORITIES, WHILE KEEPING ENOUGH DISTANCE SO THAT THE USG DOES NOT RISK IDENTIFICATION WITH QUESTIONABLE INTERROGATION TECHNIQUES OR OTHER VIOLATIONS OF DUE PROCESS.

D. THE RISK THAT CLOSE DEA/HOST COUNTRY WORKING RELATIONSHIPS MAY PRODUCE UNFAVORABLE PUBLICITY IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT SUCH AS THE DEATH OF A DEA AGENT. THE NEED FOR AT LEAST ORAL UNDERSTANDINGS WITH THE HOST GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE FOR THESE CONTINGENCIES.

3. WE SHOULD ALSO LIKE TO PROPOSE DISCUSSION OF A PROBLEM WE HAVE MENTIONED BEFORE. THAT IS, THAT AN EXPANDED DEA PRESENCE IN-COUNTRY MAKES EVEN MORE IMPERATIVE ACROSS-THE-BOARD COORDINATION IN WASHING BETWEEN DEA AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT. THE EMBASSY (AND THAT OF COURSE MEANS THE COUNTRY TEAM INCLUDING DEA) HAS A REAL NEED TO BE ADVISED PROMPTLY REGARDING IMPENDING VISITS, PROTOCOL CONTACTS WITH HOST COUNTRY OFFICIALS, NEW OPERATIONS AND OTHER DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING THE EMBASSY, CONSTITUENT POSTS AND RELATIONS WITH THE HOST COUNTRY.
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